



# **Major Amendments to the General Plan**

## **Application Procedure and Submittal Requirements**

### **Important Note**

**Before filing an application for a General Plan Amendment, you must first schedule a meeting with the Long Range Planning Manager or his representative to discuss your application request. The Long Range Planning Manager or his representative will determine if a General Plan Amendment is necessary and discuss procedures and application requirements.**

**City of Chandler Planning and Development Department  
Long Range Planning Division (480) 782-3052  
[www.chandleraz.gov](http://www.chandleraz.gov)**

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## **Introduction**

### **Major Amendments to the General Plan**

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The City of Chandler General Plan is a comprehensive document that provides a vision and a blueprint for future growth and development in the City of Chandler. The General Plan consists of fifteen elements, which contain maps, goals, objectives and policies that are used to coordinate and implement land use decisions with other decisions regarding infrastructure, parks, recreation and open space, City services, housing supply and affordability, and public resources such as air and water.

When the Land Use Map (p. 33 of the General Plan) is amended, it will have an effect on other elements of the General Plan. A proposed amendment to any element of the General Plan is a proposed amendment to the City's vision for its future. That is why when an amendment to the Land Use Map is proposed the applicant must address how the proposed amendment will affect the overall vision of the General Plan:

- Is it consistent with General Plan goals, objectives and policies?
- How will the proposed amendment affect other elements of the General Plan?

A major amendment to the General Plan is any proposal that would result in a change to the Land Use Element that would substantially alter the City's planned mixture or balance of land uses. The following criteria are to be used to determine whether a proposed amendment to the Land Use Element of the General Plan substantially alters the mixture or balance of land uses. A major amendment is any proposal that meets any one of these criteria:

1. Any change in a residential land use classification described in this General Plan to either another residential land use classification or a non-residential land use classification of 160 (quarter section) or more contiguous acres.
2. Any change in a non-residential land use classification to a residential land use classification of 160 (quarter section) or more contiguous acres.
3. Any proposal that would in the aggregate include changes in land use classifications described in this General Plan of more than 320 acres.
4. Any modification or elimination of one or more of the stated goals contained in the Land Use Element of the General Plan that changes any policy regarding overall densities, intensities or major roadway locations of 640 acres or more.

It should be noted that a designation of a proposal as a "major amendment" essentially affects the processing of the proposal and doesn't directly relate to the merits of the proposal. Any change that does not meet the above criteria defining "major" amendments shall be considered a minor amendment, in which case the applicant should obtain and fill out a minor amendment application packet.

## **Process for Major Amendments**

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The key procedural elements that apply to a major amendment proposal are:

- There is only one City Council hearing designated each calendar year to consider major amendments.
- The proposals must be submitted within the same year they are heard.
- A two-thirds majority vote of the City Council is needed to approve them.

The first City Council meeting in November is the designated City Council hearing for considering major amendments to the General Plan. In order to meet the notice requirements provided by state law, the deadline for major general plan amendment applications is July 1<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, any applications for major general plan amendments must be submitted between January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be considered at the November City Council hearing in that same year.

Proposals typically require several months of public awareness before they reach the Council hearing. The entire process (from application submittal to City Council approval) can be expected to take four to six months. The Planning and Zoning Commission will not consider a rezoning associated with any General Plan amendment until after the City Council has acted on the General Plan amendment.

### **I. Application Submittal and Review**

- Applicant: Meet with Long Range Planning to discuss applicability, criteria and process.
- Applicant: Prepare materials and studies to comply with submittal requirements.
- Applicant: Submit the completed application with required studies, plans and other documentation.
- Staff: Review the application and send comments to the applicant (the contact listed on the application). The length of the review period will depend largely on the amount of information submitted and the applicant's promptness in responding to staff's comments and questions.
- Applicant: Respond with revisions or further documentation as necessary.

### II. Public Notice and Neighborhood Meeting

- Staff: At least 60 days before the proposal is noticed for the first Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, send the proposal to the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission and submit a copy for review and comment to:
  - Maricopa County Planning and Zoning Department.
  - Each county or municipality contiguous to the corporate limits of Chandler.
  - Maricopa Association of Governments.
  - Arizona Department of Commerce.
  - Arizona Department of Transportation.
  - State Land Department.
  - Salt River Project.
  - Regional Public Transportation Authority.
  - Pinal County Planning Department.
  - Gila River Indian Community.
  - The school district governing the area encompassing the property location of the amendment.
  - Any person or entity that requests a review copy of the proposal.

In addition to the above, the Planning and Development Director may require that the proposal be forwarded for review to any other affected or interested entity such as but not limited to:

- Any Chandler board, commission, committee, or any appointed board.
- Any affected citizens group, association or organization.
- Any affected neighborhood association.
- Any City agency or department.

All recipients and any other interested parties will be given the opportunity to submit written comments to be transmitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council prior to the hearings. In addition, the Planning and Development Director may deem necessary a meeting with any affected group or person(s) prior to continuing through the public hearing process.

- Applicant: Send neighborhood meeting invitations to all property owners within one-quarter mile of the subject property. Also, send invitations to all City-registered Home Owner Associations or neighborhood contacts (in the absence of an HOA) within one mile of the subject property. Send the neighborhood meeting invitations at least 15 days prior to the meeting date. Include on the invitations the date, time and place of the neighborhood meeting, along with a copy of the amendment proposal. Provide the case planner with a copy of the invitation and the list of property owners that the invitations were sent to.

- Applicant: A minimum of 15 days prior to the neighborhood meeting, post a sign on the property with a summary of the proposal, and date, time and location of meeting. Consult with the planner for sign specifications.
- Applicant: Reserve a place and host the neighborhood meeting, which must be held in the same neighborhood/area as the subject property. The neighborhood meeting should be held prior to making the decision to schedule subsequent public hearings. Record the meeting minutes and provide a copy to the case planner for the file.
- Additional neighborhood meetings may be necessary and required in order to resolve neighborhood issues. In such cases, the applicant will have the same responsibilities as with the first neighborhood meeting. The following actions may also be required to maximize public involvement:
  - Provide information on the City's web pages.
  - Send newsletters to HOA's or other affected groups.
  - Present the proposal to HOA board meetings.
  - Distribute doorknob hangers.
  - Any other action the Planning and Development Director deems appropriate.

### III. Public Hearings

#### *Planning and Zoning Commission*

- Staff: Mail notices to all property owners within one-quarter mile of the subject property, as well as to all City-registered Home Owner Associations and neighborhood contacts within one mile of the subject property. Notices will contain a brief description of the proposed General Plan Amendment, the date, time and location of the first and second Planning and Zoning Commission hearings as well as the City Council hearing.
- Staff: Advertise the information in the newspaper for the first and second Planning and Zoning Commission hearings. For each hearing, the date, time and place of the hearing and the availability of related studies and summaries must be printed 15 to 30 days in advance.
- Applicant: Post a 4' X 6' sign on the subject property containing a brief description of the property and the date, time and location of the first and second Planning and Zoning Commission hearings and of the City Council hearing. The sign must be posted a minimum of 15 days prior to the first Planning and Zoning Commission hearing.
- First Planning and Zoning Commission hearing - to be held in the neighborhood of the subject property. Staff is responsible for reserving a place for this hearing.
- Second Planning and Zoning Commission hearing - to be held in the City Council Chambers (2nd floor of the Chandler Public Library, 22 S. Delaware St.).

### *City Council*

**Note: State law requires that all proposed major amendments to the General Plan be presented at a single City Council hearing during the calendar year the proposal is made. The City of Chandler has designated the first City Council meeting in November of each year as the single hearing for all proposed major general plan amendments.**

- Staff: Advertise the request, date, time and place of the hearing and the availability of related studies and summaries. The advertisement must be printed 15 to 30 days prior to the hearing.
- City Council hearing - to be held in the City Council Chambers (2nd floor of the Chandler Public Library, 22 S. Delaware St.).

Adoption of a major amendment to the General Plan requires an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the City Council.

If approved, the proposed General Plan Amendment will be adopted by resolution and will be effective immediately.

This schedule does not take into account any possible delays that may result from Planning and Zoning Commission or City Council action continuing the General Plan Amendment proposal to a future hearing in order to allow the applicant to address neighborhood concerns or to work with staff to resolve any outstanding issues.



# General Plan Amendment Application

<b>Project Name</b>		
<b>Property Location/Address</b>		<b>City, State, Zip Code</b>
<b>Brief Description of Requested General Plan Amendment</b>		
<b>Legal Description (If you need more room, please write "See Attached" here, and attach a separate typed legal description)</b>		<b>Tax Parcel Number(s)</b>
<b>Current Zoning</b>		<b>Gross Acreage</b>
<b>Applicant/Firm Name</b>		<b>Contact Person</b>
<b>Mailing Address</b>		<b>City, State, Zip Code</b>
<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Fax Number</b>	<b>E-mail Address</b>
<b>Property Owner</b>		
<b>Mailing Address</b>		<b>City, State, Zip Code</b>
<b>Property Owner Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<p>When there are two or more property owners in the subject area, the applicant must provide all property owner names, mailing addresses, phone numbers, signatures and corresponding parcel numbers with this application. Attach a separate sheet with additional property owner information, in which case "See attached list for additional property owner information" or a similar note should be written in the box for Property Owner. In all cases, the property owner signature(s) constitute acknowledgement and authorization to proceed with the application.</p>		

For City Use		
<b>Date Filed</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Case Planner</b>



# General Plan Amendment Submittal Requirements

**I. General Plan Amendment Narrative: Submit five copies of the narrative with the application. Each narrative must contain all of the following items:**

Required by Planner	Submitted by Applicant	Description (See following pages for more information)
		Introduction and Executive Summary
		Site Context Study
		Land Use Analysis
		General Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies
		Infrastructure and Community Services Impact Analysis
		Economic Development Analysis
		Citizen Involvement Plan

**II. In addition to the narrative, submit the following with the application:**

		Mailing labels containing property owner name and address for all properties within ¼ mile and all HOA and neighborhood contacts within 1 mile of the subject property
		Traffic Impact Study (conducted by a registered traffic engineer)
		Economic Impact Study
		Other:

## **Description of Required Narrative Items**

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### **I. Introduction and Executive Summary**

The introduction should state the requested amendment; provide an overview of the project, and introduce the applicant's team (i.e. owner, developer, and/or representative). The executive summary should provide a list of the key points that are discussed in the report.

### **II. Site Context Study**

This section should provide an analysis of the site in terms of its physical characteristics, surrounding uses, and the existing character of the area. This part will include:

- Physical condition of the site, slope, drainage, soils and any known geological constraints, environmental problems, major underground/overhead utilities present and past use, etc.
- An aerial map showing surrounding land uses and zoning within a one-mile radius.
- Proximity and relationship with nearby and adjacent uses including neighborhoods, parks, schools, area circulation, freeways, malls, etc. Identify any compatibility issues and address how they will be solved.

### **III. Land Use Analysis**

This section should provide information about the proposed development, as well as plans for any portion(s) of the parcel not included in the development plan. Basic items to address include:

- Overall description and philosophy of the proposed amendment.
- Public benefit of the proposed amendment.
- Conceptual land use plan.
- Proposed residential unit count, density, and anticipated housing mix, if applicable.
- Development phasing and timing.
- Internal circulation and pedestrian opportunities (include circulation plan).
- Open space concept plan.
- Dissimilar land use buffering techniques, if applicable.

### IV. General Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies

When an amendment to the Land Use Map (p. 33 of the General Plan) is proposed, the applicant must state how it will affect the overall vision that is expressed in the written goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan. Not all goals, objectives and policies will pertain to a proposed amendment to the General Plan. Thus, the applicant should address the General Plan goals, objectives and policies that are most relevant to the proposed amendment. The case planner may require the applicant to address specific General Plan goals, objectives and policies when the planner determines they are relevant to the proposed amendment.

The following list contains examples of written goals, objectives and policies from various elements in the General Plan that may be addressed in the narrative. This list is provided as an example only. The applicant will need to review the General Plan in order to determine which goals, objectives and policies pertain to their proposal.

#### *Land Use Element*

- **Goal:** Encourage development appropriate to the character of the community.
  - **Objective:** Maintain Chandler's overall low density, suburban scale environment not to exceed an average overall density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre. There may be specific densities identified in approved Area Plans, Planned Area Developments or development policies that are more or less than 3.5 dwelling units per acre.
- **Goal:** Balance land use decisions with economic development and quality of life objectives.
  - **Objective:** Permit appropriate amounts of commercial uses within designated areas.
- **Goal:** Continue to acknowledge the differences of each part of the City and implement strategies that best fit their planning needs.
  - **Objective:** Encourage the development of mixed-use activity centers in areas designated by policy for Special Use Commercial development.
    - **Policy:** Consider permitting a mix of public and private land uses within mixed-use activity centers.

#### *Housing Element*

- **Goal:** Take steps to provide an adequate supply of safe and affordable housing for all household income levels.
  - **Objective:** Promote diversity in housing types in the City.
    - **Policy:** Continue to promote the creation of high-wage jobs that are consistent with Chandler's housing stock profile.

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## Narrative Items Description

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### *Conservation, Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Element*

- Goal: Promote the revitalization of downtown Chandler and the surrounding neighborhoods.
  - Objective: Use sound land use planning, financial investment, coordinated redevelopment management, neighborhood improvement, and economic development strategies.

### *Growth Area Element*

- Goal: Encourage land uses that are planned for the efficient and cost effective use of public infrastructure and services.
  - Objective: Encourage the development of centrally located destinations that include a variety of activities accessible to one another by non-motorized transportation.
    - Policy: Encourage densities appropriate to the Growth Area.

### *Open Space and Recreation Element*

- Goal: Continue to provide a neighborhood park system for Chandler residents that enhances their quality of life.
  - Objective: Continue to design a system of neighborhood parks that provides at least one neighborhood park per each residential square mile.

### *Conservation and Environmental Element*

- Goal: Protect residents of Chandler from excessive noise impacts.
  - Objective: Discourage rezoning requests for residential development in high noise areas.
    - Policy: Provide buffers between high noise areas and other development.

### *Water Resources Element*

- Goal: Provide an adequate supply of water for drinking and other necessary uses.
  - Objective: Actively plan the City's water resource systems in response to continued growth in the City and in response to changing regulations.
    - Policy: Ensure that water resource planning is consistent with the General Plan.

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## Narrative Items Description

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### *Transportation and Circulation Element*

- Goal: Develop an integrated citywide multi-modal transportation system.
  - Objective: Develop a system of streets that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the City.
    - Policy: Identify and implement measures to reduce congestion on major arterial streets.

### *Bicycling Element*

- Goal: Develop a citywide system of on and off-road bicycle facilities that creates maximum safety, convenience and comfort for bicyclists of all ages and skill levels.
  - Objective: Include bicycle facility planning as part of all new development review.
    - Policy: Encourage projects that utilize planning and development review criteria facilitating access by bicycle to major destinations.

### *Public Buildings Element*

- Goal: Provide adequate facilities to service the public.
  - Objective: Provide adequate facilities for City administrative services.
    - Policy: Monitor demands on City agencies and population growth and continue to program facilities to maintain high levels of service.

When proposed amendments are not consistent with General Plan goals, objectives and policies, the proposed amendment must include one of the following:

- Justification for an exception to the written goals, objectives, and policies; or
- Proposal to modify or eliminate the contested goals, objectives, and policies (NOTE: Any modification or elimination of one or more of the stated goals contained in the Land Use Element of the General Plan that changes any policy regarding overall densities, intensities or major roadway locations, affecting 640 acres or more shall be considered a Major Amendment to the General Plan).

## **V. Infrastructure and Community Services Impact Analysis**

This section will provide information necessary to assess the proposal's impact on utilities, roads, parks, schools, and other community facilities and services. This section should address:

- Traffic analysis - address trip generation, distribution, collector road locations, traffic calming, turn lanes, bus pullouts or transit stations, intersection improvements, signals, and impacts on local and arterial road planned capacities.

## Narrative Items Description

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- Water/wastewater analysis - address capacity of the existing situation and required improvements.
- Police and fire protection analysis - address impact on existing and future services.
- School impact analysis - provide a letter/memorandum from the appropriate school district(s) addressing the potential impact of the proposal on the school(s).

### **VI. Economic Development Analysis**

The purpose of this section is to analyze and weigh the cumulative economic impacts of the proposed amendment. An economic analysis independent of the narrative is strongly recommended. Items to address include:

- A cost-benefit study that analyzes City revenues and costs for both the existing and proposed land use designations.
- Economic impact on existing and future commercial and employment areas in the area (and citywide if applicable).
- How the economic impact of the proposed amendment will improve the quality of life for the citizens of Chandler.

### **VII. Citizen Involvement Plan**

This represents an important component of the process. The City anticipates and encourages a high level of continuous interest and involvement from the community. A public involvement report should include:

- A list of all affected stakeholders, including residents, property owners, home owner associations, property owner associations, businesses, utility companies, and agencies such as school districts. Include as a separate attachment mailing labels that contain the property owner name and address for all properties that are located within one quarter of a mile from the subject property, as well as all City-registered Home Owner Associations and neighborhood contacts that are located within one mile of the subject property).
- How these participants will be informed and given the opportunity to comment.
- How all actions, meetings, and discussions will be recorded. The applicant must take minutes of neighborhood meetings and submit them to the case planner to be kept in the file as public record).
- A tentative schedule of activities such as any pre-application meetings that have already occurred with neighbors and/or other interested parties, the required neighborhood meeting and public hearings, and any other meetings that the applicant may have with interested parties.
- Contact information for all parties that have already been contacted, expressed interest or been involved in any other manner.